

The Oklahoma Mason

THE GRAND LODGE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Vol. I December/January 2013



M.:W.: Bradley S. Rickelman
Grand Master - 2013

From the Grand Master



"... and even the purple of our fraternity rest upon your honored shoulders."

How many times have we heard these words spoken at an Entered Apprentice degree, and wondered, "Will I ever wear the purple of our fraternity?" and "Could I be a leader of this organization?"

I remember very little of my Entered Apprentice degree, mostly because I had no idea what was going on and probably because I was a bit worried about what I'd gotten myself into. But I do remember that evening there were two candidates - myself and another man. We were both about the same age, and during dinner we talked about work, what was going to happen, and held the type of nervous conversation you have before doing something you aren't sure of. As we left the lodge that evening after our degrees, our masonic trajectories took two different paths.

I slowly - very slowly - learned my categorical lecture between business trips and eventually passed to Fellowcraft, and then Master Mason, and now stand here as your Grand Master. He never learned his categorical lecture, never met with the brothers to try and learn it, and even a few phone calls from me asking him to join me for practice never brought him back to lodge. A few months later when I stopped by his

office, they told me he had changed jobs and moved away. He never became a mason.

Our degrees that evening were much the same - our different outcomes must have come down to our expectations regarding the fraternity and how those expectations were met. And this is a lesson for all of us.

Going forward, whether our numbers grow or decline, whether in ten years we have 200 lodges or 20 lodges, the future of our organization depends upon the quality of the experience each mason has as a mason.

We must commit to improving the masonic experience for all brothers - and that includes ourselves.

Too often we experience dull meetings, unproductive arguments and petty quarrels in our lodges. Too often the stranger in our midst is not greeted with friendship. Too often our new Entered Apprentices do not advance to become Master Masons. These are all effects of a problem - not the cause. The cause is lodges and masons drifting along, without focus or goal or really any idea why they continue.

As a Mason - what can you do? First and foremost, you can set some goals. Even if you do not take advantage of a single program offered through the Grand Lodge, if you set goals for yourself and your lodge, you have a much greater chance of having a successful year.

Goals need not be complex to be significant, but they should be meaningful enough to help you direct your path through the year.

To this end, I have developed a theme based on the importance of Craft, Community and Commitment in Masonry and built this into my logo and pin design.

Craft

Masonry is a craft: we have to work at it just as the craftsman works at self-improvement. Learn to be a better

man and mason. The ongoing effort to become a better man is at the root of our being masons.

Community

Community is what we create between each other. Where community exists, it confers upon its member's identity, a sense of belonging and a measure of security. Community describes not only participation in your town or region (would your town miss you if your lodge were not there?), but also the relations among brothers in the lodge (what are you doing to develop a better community among brothers?). Enjoy a stronger communal bond within your community and among brothers in lodge and you will enjoy a better masonic experience.

Commitment

Being committed to something means sticking with it, even if it is difficult. We seem to live in a society and time that does not value commitment; in this, Masonry's values are opposed to society's values. Becoming a mason requires ongoing commitment to becoming a better man. If you are committed to being better, you will work to make us all have a better masonic experience.

Taken together, Craft, Community, and Commitment may serve us as a guide for setting goals which will improve the masonic experience.

Success for the Grand Lodge can only occur if local lodges and their members are successful. Remember, YOU are the Grand Lodge.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Grand Master in 2013. From the Grand Lodge officers, Grand Lodge office and myself, we wish you to have a happy and fruitful year.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brad Rickelman".

Brad Rickelman, Grand Master

Born 1965 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Bradley Stephen Rickelman spent most of his youth in northwest Houston, Texas. Brad lives with his wife Jean in Stillwater where he is Assistant Director of the Meridian Technology Center for Business Development assisting entrepreneurs in starting new businesses.

He is co-president of the Oklahoma Business Incubator Association.

A member of St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Stillwater, Brad was Junior and Senior High Youth Leader for many years, and serves on the Diocesan Youth Board for the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma. He served on the Stillwater Public Schools Long Range Planning community group.

Brad joined Stillwater's Frontier Lodge #48 in 1997 and was Worshipful Master in 2003. He served during 2006-2007 for the Grand Lodge as District Deputy Grand Master, and was Grand Flag Bearer in 2008 and Grand Musician in 2009 where he joined a small but honorable group of non-musician Grand Musicians! He was elected Junior Grand Warden in 2010, Senior Grand Warden in 2011 and Deputy Grand Master in 2012. Additionally, he is a "C" certificate lecturer.

Brad is a member of the Guthrie Scottish Rite. In the York Rite, he is a member of Stillwater Chapter and Council, and St. John's and Cimmaron Valley Commandries. Brad is also a member of Carter-Maupin Court of the Order of the Amaranth and the India Shrine.

He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Arts in Philosophy, both from Texas A&M University, and pursued doctoral work in Philosophy at the University of Kansas, where he was awarded a Graduate Student Teaching Award and met Jean. In 1995 he lived and taught English as a Second Language in Hatogaya, Japan. When Jean completed her Doctorate in Sociology in 1996, they moved to Stillwater, where Jean is currently Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at Oklahoma State University.

Officers for 2013

Grand Master Bradley S. Rickelman
 Deputy Grand Master..... Ronald Jack Chambers ¶
 Senior Grand Warden Gary L. Beisly
 Junior Grand Warden Ridge Smith
 Grand Treasurer John C. Alexander
 Grand Secretary..... Steven O. Singleton
 Grand Lecturer Ronald E. Wray

Senior Grand Deacon Jason W. Stacy
 Junior Grand Deacon..... Ronald L. Shoaf
 Senior Grand Steward..... Henry L. Henson
 Junior Grand Steward Kevin Hall
 Grand Marshal..... Mike Dixon
 Grand Pursuivant..... Ray Hugonin
 Grand Chaplain C. W. "Corky" Grigsby, Jr.
 Grand Bible Bearer..... Larry E. Adair
 Grand Sword Bearer..... Barry Wickett
 Grand Flag Bearer John F. Carter
 Grand Tyler Bradley W. Baker
 Grand Musician..... James T. Tresner II ¶

District Deputy Grand Masters

District 1..... Alva L. Loughridge	District 21..... James D. Nobles
District 2..... Samuel G. Box	District 22..... Gary A. Odendahl
District 3..... Troy L. Collier	District 23..... Todd C. Hunter
District 4..... Wayne M. Johnson	District 24..... George W. Abel
District 5..... Ronald L. Carr	District 25..... Scott Van Fender
District 6..... Robert C. Felts	District 26..... John S. Scarbrough
District 7..... John Q. Poe, Jr.	District 27..... Robert L. Padgett
District 8..... Bryan D. Wheat	District 28..... William E. Eckner
District 9..... Glenn W. Edwards	District 29..... Russell E. Fitzpatrick
District 10..... Chris L. Johnson	District 30..... Larry D. Duran
District 11..... Michael D. Dill	District 31..... Stephen B. Bowers
District 12..... Michael D. Maxey	District 32..... Glen D. Swain
District 13..... John D. Richardson	District 33..... Robert R. Jameson
District 14..... Damon R. Devereaux	District 34..... Raul M. Luna
District 15..... Roland R. Hula	District 35..... Michael S. Wright
District 16..... David G. Clark	District 36..... Burl S. Sprouse
District 17..... George R. Chapman	District 37..... Richard T. Braley
District 18..... Paul T. Currell	District 38..... Donnie G. Higginbotham
District 19..... Artie R. Staggs ¶	District 39..... Kenneth A. Staten
District 20..... David A. Sutton	

¶- Oklahoma Medal of Honor

Meet the Junior Grand Warden



Ridge Smith and his wife Carol live in Yukon, Oklahoma. He is retired from the Federal Aviation Administration, Civil Aerospace

Medicine Institute, where he designed and implemented instructional media and coordinated and supervised medical seminars for Aviation Medical Examiners.

He is a member of Yukon Lodge #90, which he served as Worshipful Master in 1992 and where he has served as Treasurer from 2002 to the present. He

has served the Grand Lodge on numerous committees, and as Junior Grand Steward in 2004, Senior Grand Steward in 2005, Junior Grand Deacon in 2006 and Senior Grand Deacon in 2007. A member of the Guthrie Scottish Rite Valley, he serves as Director of the 23rd Degree team, and holds the KCCH designation. He belongs to Capitol Hill Chapter, Council and Commandery in the York Rite.

Worshipful Brother Smith is a member of the India Shrine Temple and Past President of the India Shrine Masonic Degree Team. He is Past Grand Patron of the Order of the Eastern Star and six-times Past Patron of Yukon Chapter #245. He is Past Rainbow Dad of the Yukon Assembly and Past State Rain-

bow Dad. He is Past Chapter Dad of the Yukon DeMolay Chapter and holds the DeMolay Honorary Legion of Honor, the Advisor's Honor Key, the Zerubbabel Key, and the Rainbow Grand Cross of Color. He is an "A" Certificate Lecturer.

He served in Vietnam, and was awarded the Purple Heart. He is a member of Mensa and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot's Association, is Past Chairman of the West Point Christian Church and the Mathematics Department of Kinnich High School. He has Masters Degrees from Central State University and the University of Oklahoma. We congratulate him on his election and wish him all the best in his Masonic career.

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS FOR 2012

**The Medal of Honor is the highest honor
presented by the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma.**

The recipients for 2012 are:

FLOYD LEE HUDSON

CLOYIS W. CLAY

ROBERT DALE SMITH



From the Deputy Grand Master

The most important Committee in our organization is the Investigating Committee. How we investigate potential candidates determines the quality of men we allow into our fraternity. We want men of integrity, honesty, who are reliable and have a charitable character. The kind of men we would not be afraid to leave alone with our families and friends.

The Constitution and Code Section U405 requires that we “shall make strict inquiry into the moral, mental, physical and other proper qualifications of the petitioner.”

It's sad to say but, in these times there are men of less than reputable backgrounds who wish to use the good name and reputation of our organization to make themselves acceptable to unsuspecting victims who might otherwise avoid them.

The investigating committee has the responsibility of checking as much of the applicants background as possible. We have available the Oklahoma Court Network (OCN.com) where we can look up and check on court proceedings. Should the applicant have a Face Book

account, look at it, there could be information there that may not be discussed during an interview. Simply having the applicant come down to the lodge and or meet for coffee somewhere and talk for thirty minutes does not constitute an investigation.

It is extremely important to do the interview at the applicant's home where his wife and children can be included. Answer any questions that the wife may have concerning the organization and what requirements will be necessary for the applicant while going through the degrees, such as extra time for learning his categorical lectures. Explain that he is not just joining a social club but, an organization that has a history that goes back hundreds of years. And that his membership is a permanent commitment to self improvement.

At this time many States are going to a National Back Ground Check system because we are such a transient society and it is sometimes difficult to know what a person may have done somewhere else. Investigating committees in states that require background checks have discovered that as many as one



third of the applicants made misleading or false statements on their petition. We are in the process of getting information on this procedure and will let you know more results at a future date.

We have all heard the phrase that “Masonry takes good men and makes them better.” I believe we should get “Quality Men and Make Our Fraternity Better.”

Ron Chambers DGM



CHANGES IN THE MASONIC LAW OF OKLAHOMA

Resolutions adopted at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication made changes in the Masonic law of our state. A summary is provided here, but remember that the actual language of the Resolution is what matters.



- As part of the rules for running for Grand Lodge office, it is a Masonic offense to “hand-out, post (including, but not limited to, all electronic media such as e-mail, facebook, twitter, myspace, texting, photo-sharing, blogging, etc.) and/or distribute in any manner, any items or materials which would promote the election of any candidate for Grand Lodge office.”
- The number of members required to be present to open a Lodge of Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts, or Master Masons is as follows:
Lodge membership of 100 or more:
7 Master Masons
Lodge membership of 50 to 99:
5 Master Masons
Lodge membership of less than 50:
4 Master Masons
In all cases, at least 1 must be the Worshipful Master or a Warden of that Lodge.
- Past elected Grand Lodge officers, below the office of the Grand Master, shall be addressed with the designation of Past before their former elected office. (Example: Past Grand Secretary.) They shall not retain the prefix of Right Worshipful. Those elected Emeritus by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge will carry the name of the position so honored with the word “Emeritus” following. (Example: Grand Lecturer Emeritus.) They shall not retain the prefix of Right Worshipful, if previously held. Past appointed Grand Lodge Officers (to include any honorary or unofficial appointment beyond the Constitution) shall not carry any title, such as Past Grand Pursuivant. Past appointed Lodge officers and past elected Lodge officers, below the office of Master, (to include any honorary or unofficial appointment beyond the Uniform Code) shall not carry any title, such as Past Junior Steward.
- No lodge shall display any type of political sign or allow any political function any place in or on its property. But this prohibition does not prevent a Lodge being used as an official government polling location.
- In a housekeeping resolution, the terms used to refer to per capita, fees, etc. were made consistent.
- Clarifies that the Grand Master cannot issue a dispensation allowing a Lodge to confer all 3 Degrees on a candidate on the same day.
- Revoked the right of a member of a Lodge to object to the visitation of a Brother from another Lodge.
- Housekeeping resolution which clarifies the section of the Code relating to per capita.
- Set the filing dates for Brethren wishing to be elected to the Charity Foundation to be the same as those wishing to be elected to Grand Lodge office. (Prior to the last day of March.)
- Adds the filing of all local, state or federal reports to the duties of the Lodge Treasurer.
- The 28-day required waiting period for balloting on an application for affiliation was removed.

From the Grand Treasurer



The year 2013 brings new challenges to the Masonic Fraternity. The Grand Secretary will be conducting six training sessions for the

Lodge Secretaries in the first part of the year and I will accompany him on several of these events to better familiarize the Officers of the Lodges of good management practices with regards to handling the finances of their individual Lodges.

The Board of Trustees recommend that all Lodges throughout the State review their revenue stream from regular Lodge dues. This income from regular

dues should satisfy utility and maintenance expenses, if not the Lodge should consider raising their Dues. The income from your Perpetual Endowed Membership funds should be utilized for repair/replacement and community activities.

The PEM fund has more than \$ 6,000,000 in NAFA Capitol Market account in GNMA Bond Funds. In 2011, this Fund paid out \$ 623,287.22 to the Lodges throughout the State. This was over a 10% interest yield. Currently the PEM Endowed funds are earning 8.8 9.0 % interest, which is less than in 2011, due to the current U.S. Economy. The question comes up, is this still a good investment? My answer is Yes! You cannot earn this high of interest anywhere else and it is an investment in the future of your Lodge.

Though the twelve months of 2012 the Trustees have exercised their fiscal responsibilities with the overall Revenue of Grand Lodge for the year of \$ 547,032.24 or 105.2 % of budgeted income. Our Total Expenses for the same period of time was 93.5 % of budgeted expenses. The members of Grand Lodge, at our annual session, approved the 2013 General Fund Budget for the operation of your Grand Lodge Revenue of \$ 536,445.00 with Expenses of \$ 535,400.00 from Officer Expense, Salaries, Grand Lodge Programs, Building Expense, Office Operations and the Oklahoma Mason.

If you have questions concerning the Budget, Dues or PEM Funds you can contact via e mail at:

johnalextr@valornet.com

John C. Alexander, Grand Treasurer

Lodge Secretary Workshops



The Grand Secretary and Director of the Masonic Charity Foundation will be conducting six regional Workshops for 2013. While the intent is to train and enlighten secretaries, each lodge is encouraged

to send a representative, whoever that may be. DDGMs will be invited as well. Each lodge is encouraged to contact the Grand Secretary and let him know what date/location you plan to attend so that appropriate materials can be prepared.

Topics will include forms and materials of the Grand Lodge, reports, and other issues pertinent to daily operation of your lodge. John Logan, Executive Director of the Masonic Charity Foun-

dation, will also be there to answer questions about Matching Funds, Promises Matter, and other issues.

The six locations were chosen to allow each quadrant and the two metro areas to host an event. You are not limited to attending an event in your area; the goal is attendance! Each session is designated to start at 9:00am and end by noon, unless specifically noted below:

**Jan 5th – Pilgrim Rock Lodge #522
(TULSA and SURROUNDING AREA)**

**Jan 12th - Bartlesville Lodge # 284
(NORTHEAST)**

**Jan 26th 2:00pm – Moore Lodge # 539
(OKC and SURROUNDING AREA)**

**Feb 9th - 2:00pm – Lawton Lodge #183
(SOUTHWEST)**

**Feb 23rd – S. McAlester Lodge # 96
(SOUTHEAST)**

**Mar 2nd – Alva Lodge # 105
(NORTHWEST)**

Registration forms were mailed to each lodge and are also available under the Grand Secretary page on the Grand Lodge website: <http://www.gloklahoma.com/GrandSecretary/grandsec.html>

These dates and locations are subject to change based on weather and event conflicts. Each lodge and participant will be notified as soon as possible for any changes.

Steve Singleton, Grand Secretary

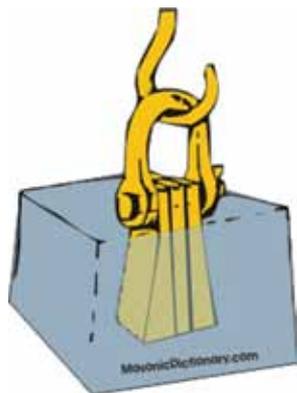
GRAND MASTER'S CALENDAR

MISSING SYMBOLS

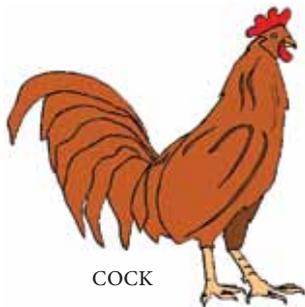
Several symbols which used to be common in Freemasonry are seldom seen in the United States, although you will find them in other countries.

Three of them, shown here, are the lewis, the cock, and the skirret.

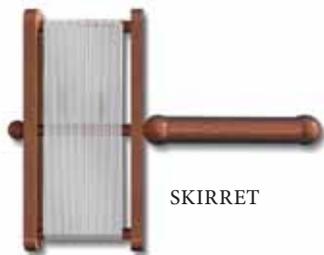
While in interpretation of symbols is left up to each Master Mason, it is interesting to explore some possible meanings. If you want to join the fun, do some searching. Some of the symbolic meanings will be given later in this magazine.



LEWIS



COCK



SKIRRET

JANUARY

- 4 - Trustees meeting
- 24 - Dist 10 Reception of Grand Lodge Officers, Pocasset 7:00pm
- 25-26 - Demolay Workshop
- 26 - Masonic Charity Foundation Meeting
- 26 - Dist 30 Reception of Grand Lodge Officers, Blanchard, 6:30pm
- 31- Dist 11 Reception of Grand Lodge Officers, Catoosa, 6:30pm

FEBRUARY

- 2 - Trustee Mtg
- 8 - Jurisprudence Meeting
- 9 - Yukon "West OK" School of Instruction
- 13- Reception of Grand Lodge Officers India Lodge, 11:00 am (closed meeting)
- 16 - Potentate Ball OKC/India Shrine 6:00pm
- 16-20 - Conference of Grand Masters (Kansas City)

MARCH

- 9 - Trustee Meeting
- 12 - Stonewall Calf Fry, 6:00 pm
- 14 - India Shrine Circus (Potentates Box) 7:00pm
- 14- 16 - Kansas Grand Lodge
- 16 - OETA on air event 5:00pm

APRIL

- 5-7 - Guthrie Scottish Rite
- 5 - Trustee Meeting
- 7-10 - Grand Master out of state
- 12- 13 - McAlester Scottish Rite
- 17 - Student of Today / Teacher of Today presentations, Tahlequah 6:30pm
- 20-21- Tulsa Scottish Rite
- 23-25 - Grand Master out of state - New Jersey Grand Lodge
- 25 - Award for Arts Excellence program, Guthrie 6:00pm
- 25-27 - York Rite Annual Meeting, OKC

MAY

- 4 - Trustee Meeting
- 11 - Jurisprudence Meeting
- 17-18-Grand School

- 17 - McConnell Picnic
- 23 - Amaranth Grand Court 8:00 pm
- 25 - CSSA Motor Court (India Shrine)
- 26 - Rainbow Girls Banquet (Greetings, scholarships) Norman, 4:30 pm

JUNE

- 1-Job's Daughters Banquet, 7:00 pm
- 4 - OK Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Tulsa
- 31- Imperial Shrine (Indianapolis)

JULY

- 1-7 - Imperial Shrine (Indianapolis)
- 12-13 - DeMolay Conclave (Stillwater)

AUGUST

- 2-4 - Warden's Retreat/Officers Training weekend
- 9 - Trustee Meeting
- 10 - White Buffalo
- 17 - Grand Master Anniversary
- 17 -Jurisprudence Meeting
- 23-25 - Lapland (OK/Kansas group - meet in Enid)
- 24-27 Grand Master out of state: Scottish Rite Biannual Session, Washington D. C.
- 27 - Grand Master Wife's Birthday

SEPTEMBER

- 17 - State Teacher of Year (11:00 am)
- 21- Cornerstone, Darlington (with OES) (tent)
- 28 - GM York Rite Field Day

OCTOBER

- 10 - Grand Master's night at Akdar Shrine, Tulsa
- 12-13 - Guthrie Scottish Rite
- 19-20 - McAlester Scottish Rite
- 20-23 - OES Annual Meeting
- 26-27 - Tulsa Scottish Rite

NOVEMBER

- 6 - Final Trustee Meeting
- 7 - Final Jurisprudence Meeting
- 8-9 - Grand Lodge
- 10 - Ron Chambers' Apron Presentation

Grand Master's Programs for 2013

A copy of my 2013 programs booklet and Worshipful Master Agreement are being mailed to your lodges.

Please review the programs for this year with your Wardens and brothers. I hope you will take advantage of them to improve the lodge experience.

My message for 2013 is this: if we do not improve the experience each brother has in being a Mason, we cannot expect him to attend our meetings and participate in Masonry. If we don't greet him **at the door**, how can we expect to keep him **inside the door**?

In the programs booklet, the first program I describe is the **Worshipful Master's Agreement**. This agreement is between the Worshipful Master and his lodge members: What are three goals he has for his lodge in 2013?

Each goal should fulfill one of the three key points of my year

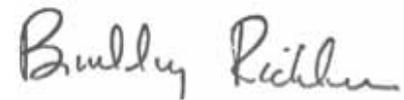
1. **CRAFT** - a goal helping the brothers to learn to be better Masons
2. **COMMUNITY** - a goal your lodge can achieve publicly in the community
3. **COMMITMENT** - a goal that strengthens the lodge itself, allowing it to continue far into the future.

I've listed some sample goals in each category in the booklet to help, but it is best if you come up with goals that are useful and important for your lodge. Some lodges may have a goal of a new roof - others may have a goal to clean the lodge! What matters is less the size of the goal, than the need behind the goal.

I've included a simple form which asks the Worshipful Master to write or type the lodge's goals for the year and return to the Grand Lodge. The form can also be found on the Grand Lodge web site under **Grand lodge/ Programs/GM Programs**. I would like completed forms at the Grand Lodge office by January 31st, I will distribute them to your District Deputy Grand Master and to the Grand Lodge line officers. We are here to help.

I look forward to receiving your lodge's goals, and hope to see you at an event or lodge in 2013!

Fraternally,



Brad Rickelman, Grand Master

From the Grand Lecturer



Greetings my Brethren All,

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas.

Just a few lines to let you know of some events going on. The Board of Grand Lecturers

held their first meeting of this Grand Lodge year on December 8, 2012, and will be holding a Masonic School of Instruction at Delta Lodge #425 in Tulsa on March 23, 2013.

They will also hold a Masonic School of Instruction at Siloam Lodge #276 on August 31, 2013.

Yukon Lodge #9 will be holding their first annual IRONMAN school of

instruction on February 9, 2013. This school will be much like the one held in Atoka known as TOUGH school. Hopefully, many of the central Oklahoma Masons will be able to attend.

As of this letter there are a few schools scheduled.

January 19, 2013
Mannford Lodge #515

January 26, 2013
Pond Creek Lodge #125

February 4, 2013
Coweta Lodge #251

Don't forget Grand School will be May 17-18 in Guthrie. The Inn at the Scottish Rite Temple will be available the evening of May 17, so plan on attending.

Brethren, all Master Masons are encouraged to attend these schools of instruction. They may be called "Local," "District," "Grand," "Ironman," "Tough," or "Masonic," but the key word is **SCHOOL**, and all Master Masons are welcome.

Let's make 2013 a great year for attending every school in our areas, because this is the way to learn how the work is being taught by the Deputy Grand Lecturers in this Grand Jurisdiction. I hope you have a Happy New Year.

Fraternally,

Ronald Wray, Grand Lecturer

2013 TIMELINE FOR M.C.F.O. PROGRAMS

DECEMBER

2012 Matching Funds application deadline is Monday 12/17/2012.

OETA - Letters are mailed to all Oklahoma Lodges regarding the upcoming OETA telethon which will be held tentatively on Saturday March 16, 2013. Lodges are asked to contribute \$1.50 per member.

JANUARY

The Oklahoma Food Bank Program – Funds for this program will be presented to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma or the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, determined by the location of the Lodge that made the contribution. A letter from the Grand Master will be mailed to all Lodges in the Spring asking that the Lodge contribute \$1.50 per member.

FEBRUARY

Senior Essay Contest winners will be announced. Letters are sent to all participating schools announcing the names of the local division (male and female) winners and/or state-wide winners. Copies of the letters are also sent to the participating lodges. Lodges are urged to contact schools and coordinate presentation date, time and place.

Student & Teacher of Today forms are mailed to all Oklahoma Lodges. Lodges are encouraged to distribute these forms at their local public schools. Schools mail completed forms to the Masonic Charity Foundation.

MARCH

Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma Youth Scholarship Program notifications will be mailed to all Youth Group Leaders in the state. The Leaders are asked to distribute the information to all of their Youths who are attending or will attend college in the current year.



Youth Scholarship Program

- Completed scholarship applications are due. (Postmark deadline is May 1, 2013) The Education Committee of the Foundation will meet and award scholarships so that the winners will be notified in time for them to receive the scholarships at their Annual Assembly, Conclave or Bethel.

AUGUST

Senior Essay packets are mailed to all Oklahoma Lodges. This essay contest is open to all seniors in Oklahoma Public Schools. Lodges are encouraged to deliver these packets to their local high schools. The deadline for essays is usually the end of October. Essays are then professionally graded in November & December with results being announced in January.

SEPTEMBER

State Teacher of the Year ceremony at the Oklahoma State Fair in Oklahoma City. The Grand Master presents a framed certificate to every district winner present; a \$500 check to each Rising Star honoree, a \$1,000 check to each of the eleven Teacher of the Year finalists; a \$5,000 check to the Teacher of the Year; and a \$5,000 check to school district of Teacher of the Year. (This event is usually held the 3rd Tuesday of the month of September)

OCTOBER

Senior Essay Contest deadline is Wednesday, October 31, 2013.

DECEMBER

2013 Matching Funds application deadline is Monday 12/16/2013

O.E.T.A. Telethon (Mason night is scheduled for Saturday, March 16, 2013) - Lodge contributions, plus matching funds are presented by the Grand Master.

APRIL

Awards for Arts Excellence - This program will be held on April 25, 2013 at the Scottish Rite Temple in Guthrie. The Grand Master and State Superintendent present many medals.

Senior Essay certificates and checks for winning students are mailed to all participating Lodges for presentation by the Lodge. Lodges are urged to contact schools and arrange presentation date, time and place.

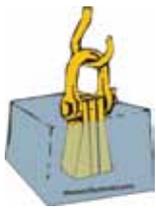
Student of Today and Teacher of Today certificates are mailed to Schools or Lodges prior to the presentation date. Lodges are urged to contact schools and confirm presentation date, time and place.

MAY

Student of Today and Teacher of Today certificates are mailed to Schools or Lodges prior to the presentation date. Lodges are urged to contact schools and confirm presentation date, time and place.

ANSWERS TO THE MISSING SYMBOLS

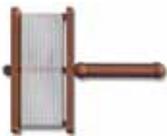
Remember that no one speaks officially when it comes to the interpretation of Masonic symbols. Some traditional meanings are suggested here, but you are completely at liberty to interpret them as you see fit.



The lewis is an iron clamp, inserted into a prepared cavity in a stone. A hook and pulley are attached, whereby the stone can be lifted to any height desired. It symbolizes strength and ability. The term is also applied to the son of a Freemason. In some Jurisdictions, a lewis can petition and join the Fraternity at a younger age than the usual minimum.



The cock or rooster is the symbol of the dawn, therefore of light or enlightenment, new beginnings, etc. It is also a traditional symbol for Mercury or Hermes. Part of its symbolism equates with the Master in the Lesser Lights. Its association with Mercury also makes it a symbol of transformation.



The skirret is a spool of twine. Its operative use is to lay foundations and straight lines for building, rather as we would use a chalk-line today. In Oklahoma Masonry, it survives only as the line presented to the Master of a Lodge during his installation. Symbolically, it stresses the importance of building from a foundation which is square and true and "within bounds."

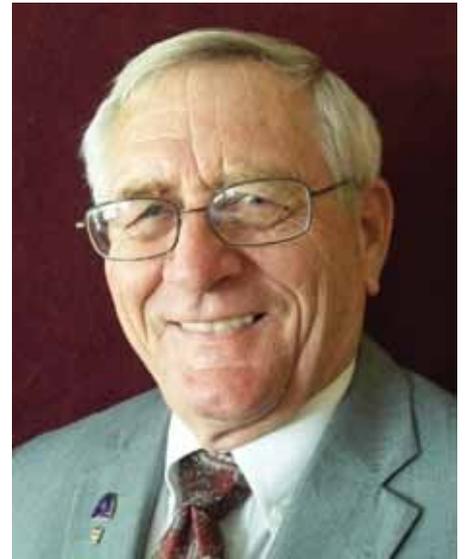
Masons are an inquisitive lot ...

Masons are an inquisitive lot. We ask all kinds of questions; questions about how the fraternity originated, what various symbols really mean, and many other questions. Some of the questions are difficult and some are easy. One Mason asked why his lodge was called a Blue Lodge; another said he knew what a Due Guard was, but what did the words mean, where did the words originate. We want to find answers to our questions.

We want to learn from our questions. There are several Masonic references that have answers to our questions. One such book is "An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry". It was written by Albert G. Mackey. This is the same Mackey that developed the Landmarks as used in Oklahoma Masonry. This book has a copyright date of 1873. My copy of the book has a published date of 1919; a little dated, but interesting reading. A much more up-to-date source is the Grand Lodge Website, www.gloklahoma.com. Look under the "About Freemasonry" and "Masonic Education" tabs. There you will find links to other Masonic education sites, a glossary of Masonic terms, FAQ's, and many other items of interest.

Many questions often involve procedures and rules of Masonry. A recently installed Worshipful Master commented that many of his lodge's officers and members were going to be out of town over the holidays and he didn't see how he could have a meeting on the 27th. He wondered if he would get in trouble for not having a St. John's Observance meeting on the 27th.

Another said he knew elected officers had to be proficient in the Master Mason work but wondered if that requirement applied to appointed officers. Answers to this type of questions are found in the Constitution and Code; the document that Worshipful Masters are admonished during their installation "to search at all times". Typically, a brother with a question will pose it to another brother and receive an answer that will guide him in actions. But, while getting the answer from another person resolves



the immediate concern, it does not help with actually learning the answer.

When I go to a source such as the Constitution and Code for information, I usually end up reading and learning about other things in addition to what I was originally looking for. For this reason, I think it very important for the lodge officers, if not all Masons, to search the Constitution and Code and become knowledgeable of it.

The Grand Lodge has a program that is available to all Masons; a series of three correspondence courses. The first course, Course I, is especially recommended. It is an easy, open book, multiple-choice test that is on the Constitution and Code. This valuable education course is available by simply requesting it from the Grand Lodge. The cost of the course is \$10.00. I think it would be beneficial if lodges required their top three officers to complete Course I before they could be installed into their office. The Lodge officers who have attended the Officers' Retreat have received instruction from Most Worshipful Bobby Laws and have learned how important it is for each of us to be conversant with the Constitution and Code.

Gary Beisly
Senior Grand Warden

The Warrior Poet

G. CLIFF PORTER

Remember a time when a man could dance the tango, quote Shakespeare, hold a door for a lady, but hold his own in a fight? I don't. I am a Gen Xer, the generation of fatherless sons who have learned mixed ideas about manhood being either that of a man who wears pink polo shirts and cries at lots of movies or some hyper-machismo blockhead who goes through life kicking and punching.

So in comes the lost art of Masonry. Chisel and maul in hand, the speculative Craft seeks to hone men from the rough stone of youth, uncertainty, and intolerance.

Masonry raises warrior poets—a man that can hug his Brother, pray with a widow, and wield a sword. The man who received little in the way of training in discourse, is taught to stand up in lodge, provide a detailed plan, and make a motion for an idea that he believes could benefit the lodge and his brothers. He practices rhetoric in explaining the progression of his theory, he practices logic in refining his theory when presented with obstacles that prove correct and help to improve the idea. He moves

through the chairs and one day wields the gavel of authority and, in doing so, he learns the necessity of humility and discretion.

The obligations are not those of a weak spine. They teach the necessity for a gentle spirit in caring for widows and orphans, at the same time recognizing the necessity for action, allowing that we should not strike in anger, providing the whispered message that the ability to strike is one of the working tools of a Mason. We are taught that strength in spirit and courage in faith, hope, and charity are more powerful wielded by a man of his word, than the sword of metal by a despotic man or government.

We learn to appreciate “art” and recognize the downfalls and pleasures of power as we are faced with the dangers of mob rule, organized orthodoxy, and misguided desires in our Master Mason degree. At the same time, the road is perilous and we are confronted with the need for real courage in the face of physical danger. We are taught of the need for physical consequences for weakness of spirit in the penalties inflicted upon



these unjust and uncaring Fellows of the Craft. We learn that an apology is correct, but that it does not negate the requirement for justice.

We are taught the art of the Warrior Poet, my friends. Educate yourselves so that we can educate others; arm a society with a sword of truth and public education against the tyranny of despotism, whether material or spiritual.





Justin Craparotta (left) stands with his father, Gerald Craparotta, prior to their induction Sunday as the worshipful masters at local Masonic lodges. (Enid News & Eagle Staff Photo by BILLY HEFTON)

“Father, son now Masonic Leaders”

That was the headline for a story in the *Enid News and Eagle* on December 30. Gerald Craparotta had been installed a few days before as Worshipful Master of Enid Lodge #80. His son, Justin, was installed as Worshipful Master of Garfield Lodge #501 in Enid, of which Gerald is a dual member. Both installations were performed by Jimmy Dean Hartzell. It is the first time the two Enid Lodges have been headed by a father-son team.

Father and son joined at the same time and went through the Degrees together. Gerald Craparotta said their membership had brought an even closer relationship between them. Justin had worked at his father’s restaurant as head

chef before the left for college. “We were together all the time—it was a great bond,” Gerald said. “When he went to college and came back, it wasn’t the same. This afforded us an opportunity to get back to that, as a different type of father-son relationship.”

Their installations signal a period of even closer cooperation between the two Lodges. There are about 250 members of each Lodge. Traditionally Enid #80 has placed emphasis on fraternal aspects such as care of Masonic widows, food baskets, etc. Garfield #501 has stressed community and school involvement. The two Craparottas hope to strengthen the activities of both Lodges by a combination of both elements.

From the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma

Oklahoma Senior Assistance Program

The Area Agencies on Aging received \$720,586 for use in 2013 for needy Oklahoma senior citizens. On December 4th, 2012 Grand Master Rickelman, and David Ray, President of the Masonic Charity Foundation—on behalf of the Masons of Oklahoma— presented a check to representatives of the Area Agencies on Aging at their annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Matching Funds Program

Each year the Foundation makes available to lodges \$12,500.00 for local charitable or educational purposes, every dollar of which is eligible to aid a needy brother or his family. We call those types of requests Promises Matter Matching requests.

In 2012 a total of 187 Promises Matter Matching requests were received requesting a total of \$154,932.00 be matched.

If the lodge doesn't use all of the Matching Funds available to them for aiding a needy brother or his family, the Foundation allows the lodge to utilize up to \$10,000.00 for local charitable or educational needs. In 2012 a total of 1,715 requests were received requesting a total of \$1,487,287 be matched.

As you can see through the use of this program in 2012, the Masonic Fraternity contributed a minimum of \$3,284,438 for local charitable or educational needs in Oklahoma communities.

Changes to the Matching Funds Program for 2013

Please note several changes that have occurred for 2013.

1. Meals: The section on meals on page 6 of the program form which currently reads: "Some policy of restricting Matching Funds for meals has been in place from the beginning of the Matching Funds program, because the Fraternity is so centered around Lodge fraternal dinners. If meals are for a



On December 4th, 2012 Grand Master Rickelman, right, and David Ray, President of the Masonic Charity Foundation—on behalf of the Masons of Oklahoma— presented a check to representatives of the Area Agencies on Aging at their annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

charitable or educational endeavor, and are served at a location other than the Lodge building, they possibly qualify for Matching Funds.

The above rule is amended as follows: *Meals are not considered charitable or educational thus no longer qualify for Matching Funds except for nutrition programs such as Meals on Wheels, Nutrition Program at Senior Citizens Centers & Public Schools, Food for Kids Backpack Program, etc. This ruling on not funding meals includes teacher/student appreciation meals, awards banquets, and booster club meals for students, etc.*

2. The following projects **do not qualify for Matching Funds** and have been added to the section on page 6 of the

program form:

- a. **Letter jackets, championship rings & trophies:** these items are not considered charitable or educational,
- b. **Promotional Cards:** These are cards which are typically sold by football players, basketball players, booster clubs, etc. that can be purchased for a small fee in exchange for savings at various establishments within the community. The proceeds from such cards are not eligible for Matching Funds.

In no way does this mean that the Lodge should not be involved in the above projects, it simply means the projects are not considered charitable or educational; therefore, they are not

An Invitation to Participate in the Masonic Short Talk Competition

eligible for Matching Funds.

3. A “cap” has been placed on the following projects:
 - a. A \$500 Matching Funds cap has been placed on the following projects: After Prom events, Project Graduation, Project Safe, etc. (this includes any “lock-in” event which is held for the students). This means a lodge can apply up to \$500 in Matching Funds for any of the above events.
4. **Forming Partnerships:** When forming “partnerships” with other organizations, the lodge must do more than vote to apply for Matching Funds and have 1 or 2 members show up during the event. The lodge members must be involved in some portion of the event itself and the public must be aware that the Masons are involved (this comes from flyers, newspaper articles, tickets, etc.). A pass through or laundering of funds is prohibited.

As we begin the New Year the education committee is happy to announce a new education program, The Masonic Short Talk Competition. A program which has already seen great success on the local lodge level, the Short Talk Competitions provide a new and innovative way to look at Masonic education across the entire state.

The Short Talk Competition is a great way to introduce Masonic education into your local lodge in a fun and exciting manner by having brother’s present original presentation on some aspect of masonry. By restricting the presentation’s length, a wide variety of topics may be covered all in an evening. Brothers who have never had the time or motivation to participate in Masonic education can now jump in with only a small amount of effort and yet make a big impact on Masonic education in Oklahoma.

The rules are simple:

1. The presenter’s topic must be related to masonry in some positive way,
2. The presentations must be at least 5 minutes - but no longer than 15 minutes - in length (yes we will cut you off, even if you are not done)

3. There must be some type of visual component to the presentation (i.e. PowerPoint, posters, etc.)

Winners are judged by the audience in three categories: Best Overall, Most Educational, and Best Visual Component. Prizes are awarded in each category. Most importantly, however, everyone is more enlightened by the experience.

Under the direction of the education committee and over the course of the next year, we will be conducting six local lodge short talk competitions across the state, followed by four regionals and concluding with a state wide event. The overall winner will present his short talk during the 2013 Annual Communications of Grand Lodge.

We will begin the event at Frontier Lodge #48 in Stillwater on February 21st with a meal at 6:30pm and the competition starting at 7pm. The rest of the year’s schedule will be released in mid-February. If you have not had a chance to be a part of this great new Masonic education program, be sure to make plans to attend one of the local lodge events and see – and hear - what it is all about!

Robert Cook, Chairman,
Masonic Education Committee



BRETHREN, WE’D LOVE TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR LODGE!

Please send photographs to the editor at

jim.tresner@yahoo.com

**Don’t limit yourself to check presentations, installations, etc.
Be creative—just we sure we have permission to use the photographs.**

During 2012, First Lady Kim Rogers raised money for cancer research with the sale of her pin. Many Oklahoma Masons contributed to the cause. We're happy to print the content of the letter she received from the Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma:

Dear Kim,

With the holiday season now in full swing, I enjoy the crisp air and nostalgic sights and sounds of the season. During this time of exchanging gifts, I especially want to express my appreciation for your generosity towards the work of the Stephenson Cancer Center.

Thank you for your contribution to the Breast Cancer Research Fund at the Stephenson Cancer Center. Contributions like yours are important for funding our research, support programs for patients and their families, training programs for new cancer health care professionals and the most advanced cancer treatments in Oklahoma. Your gift not only provides important resources in our fight, but it also encourages us in our efforts.

On behalf of the patients who ultimately will benefit from your generosity, please accept my personal gratitude.

Sincerely

Robert S. Mannel, M.D.

Director and Rainbolt Family Chair in Cancer

Peggy and Charles Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma